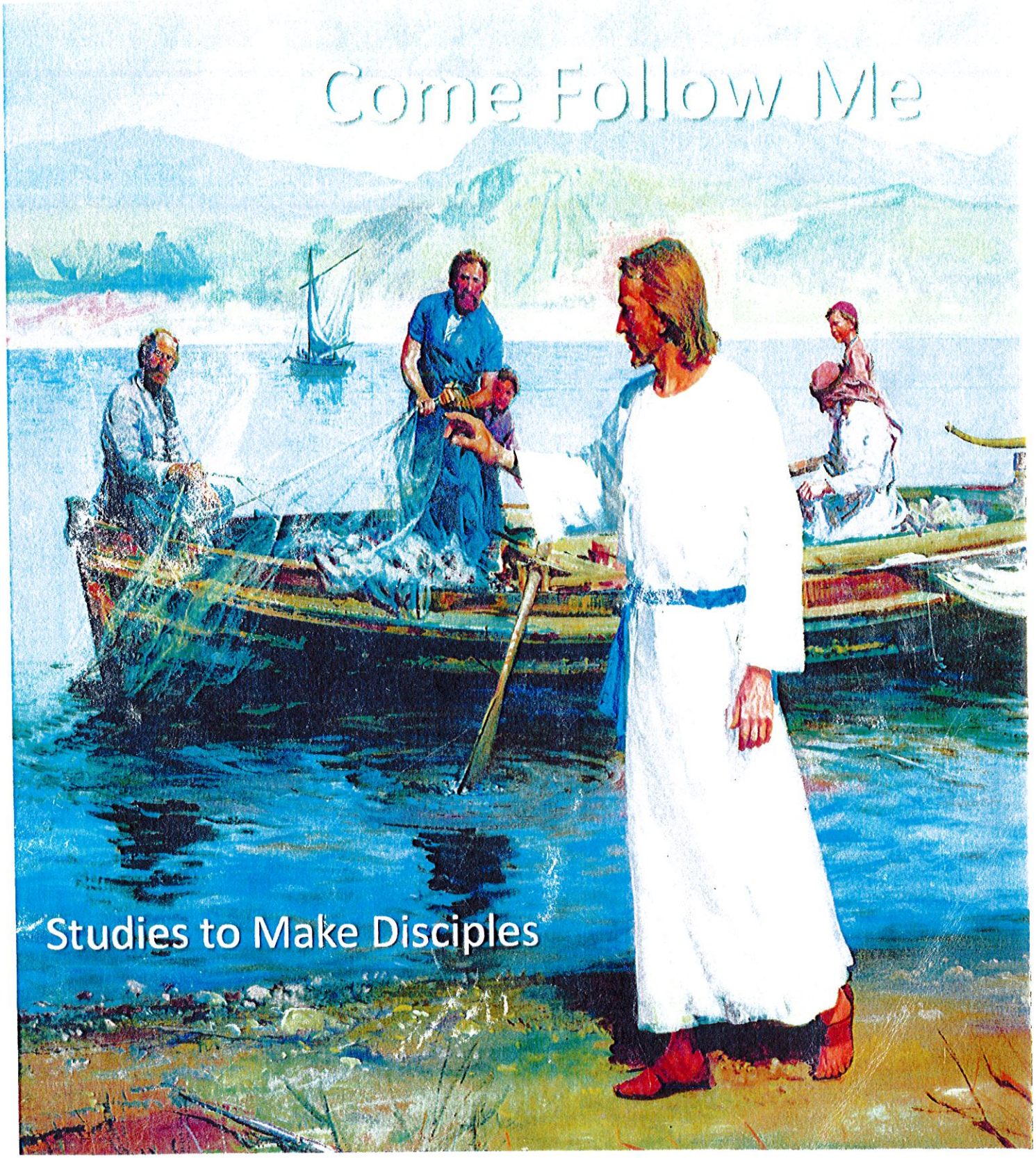
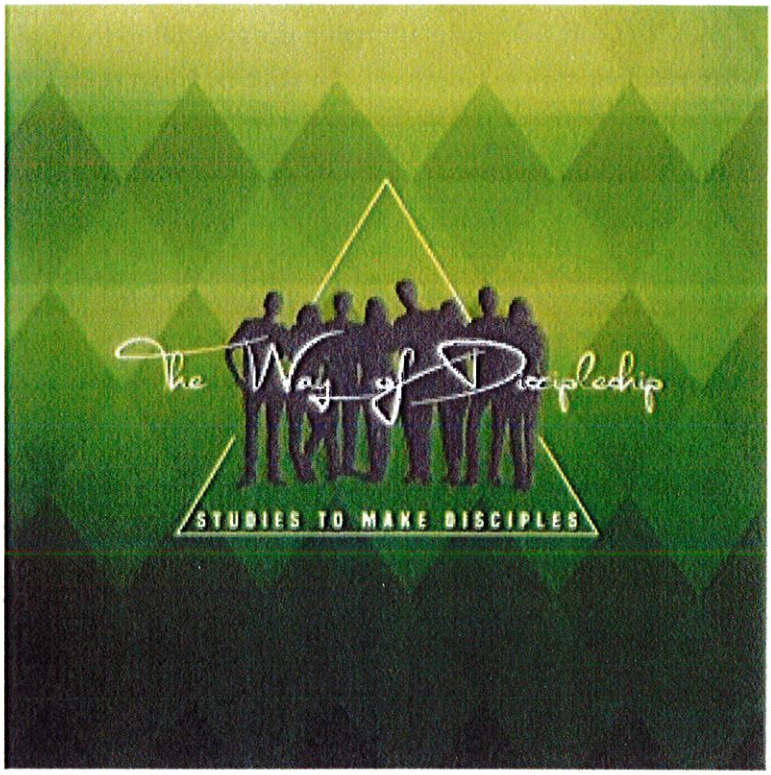


[18] Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

A FEW REMINDERS BEFORE YOU BEGIN



REMINDER #1 — The goal of these studies is that your student be transformed, from the inside out, into a disciple of Christ. Transformation requires more than the exchange or processing of information. It requires understanding and application. If either the "inside" (repentance) or the "outside" (obedience) is missed, you will not hit the disciple-making target. Transformation occurs when truth changes your student's heart and behavior. At the conclusion of each study you will present a decision that requires a change of heart/mind (repentance), and a decision that requires a change of behavior. Do not be afraid of the call to decide and obey, and do not be afraid to offer accountability when your call goes unheeded. Rather, be reassured that you are simply doing all you can to help your student become a person of sincere faith who will be more than a hearer of the word.

[5] *My goal in giving you this order is for love to flow from a pure heart, from a clear conscience, and from a sincere faith.* (1 Timothy 1:6 GW)

[23] *Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror* [24] *and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.* [25] *But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.* (James 1:24-25 NIV)

REMINDER #2 — You will rarely get a level of commitment from your student that you have not called for and expected. If a person will not commit to Christ, do not compromise the commitment that Christ called for. Jesus allowed a rich young ruler to walk away rather than allowing this rich young "self-ruler" live with the delusion that he was a follower. We will not have world-changing churches without life-changing followers.

[25] *One day when large groups of people were walking with Him, Jesus turned and told them,* [26] *"Anyone who comes to me but refuses to let go of father, mother, spouse, children, brothers, sisters — yes, even one's own self! — can't be my disciple.* [27] *Anyone who won't shoulder his own cross and follow behind me can't be my disciple."* (Luke 14:25-27 MP)

REMINDER #3 — Relationship is essential to the transformation process. When God chose a "method," He chose a man (or woman). For God so loved the world that He didn't send a tract. Human relationship and loving connection is the consistent channel through which God brings salvation and transformation to the lost. Truth without love is offensive. Love without truth is irrelevant. A loving relationship is the plow that breaks up the difficult soil allowing it to welcome the seed that is being planted.

[11] For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, [12] encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

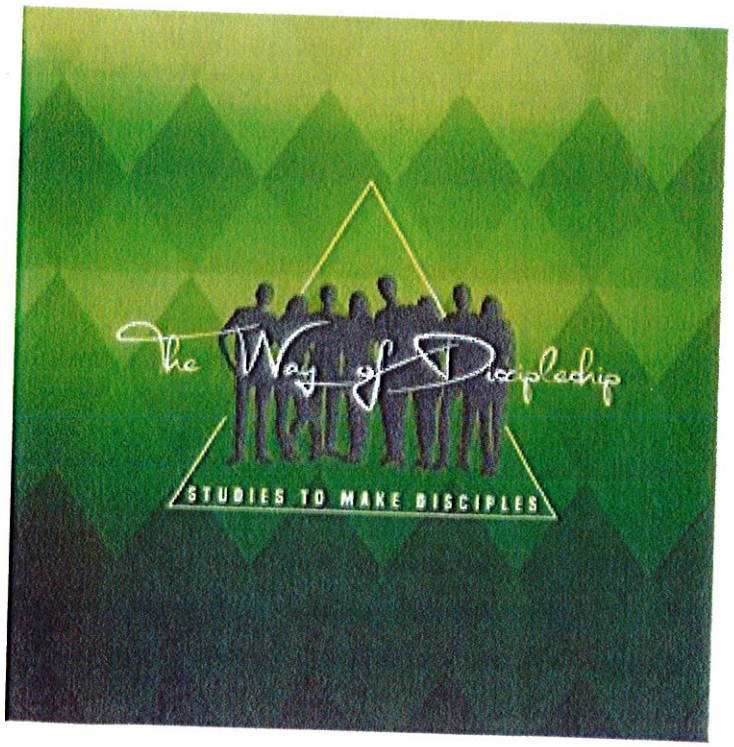
[13] And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe. (1 Thessalonians 2:11-13)

[15] Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. (Ephesians 4:15 NLT)

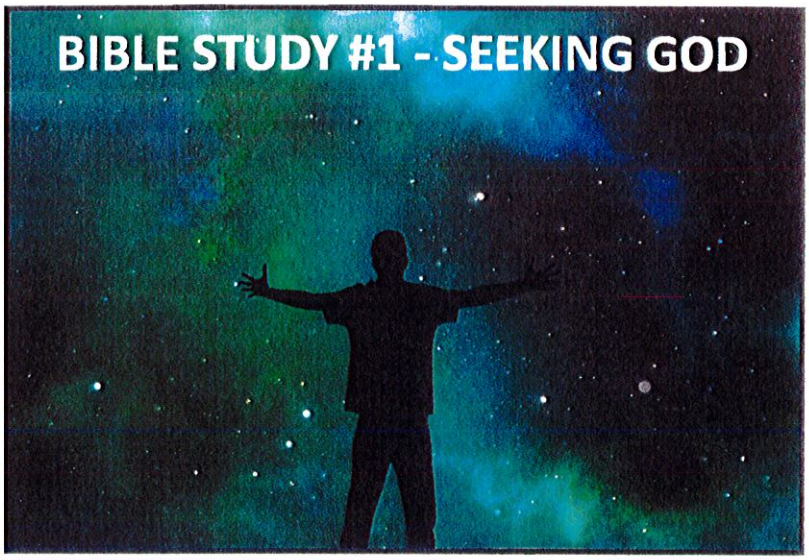
REMINDER #4 — Pray, Pray, Pray and Pray! Pray for your student! Pray for yourself! Ask others to pray!

Dear brothers and sisters, the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is for the people of Israel to be saved. (Romans 10:1 NLT)

And don't forget to pray for me. Pray that I'll know what to say and have the courage to say it at the right time, telling the mystery to one and all... (Ephesians 6:19 The Message)



Study Goals:



- *To communicate God's desire to bless your student through a close, personal relationship with Him.*

  (Jeremiah 29:11-14, John 10:10)

- *To give hope by showing that God has arranged this time and place so that He could provide a future filled with hope.*

  (Acts 17:26-27, Jeremiah 29:11)

- *To make clear what seeking God with all their heart involves.*

  (Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 13:44, Acts 8:26-40) 2Kings 17:7-18

Jeremiah 29:11-14 ----------

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. [12] *Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.* [13] *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.* [14] *I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."*

NOTE: This passage was written at a time when God's people were enslaved. Israel had forsaken God in almost every way imaginable and as always they paid the price for their disobedience. Even so, God had not given up on them. They had rebelled against God, but there was (is) hope!

v. 11 ----------

? **From this verse what do you think God wants your future to be like?**

(Plans to prosper, protect, a hope and a future)

? **Do you have a hard time believing that God wants to bless you or that He has great plans for your life? Why?**

NOTE: A person's previous behavior can make it difficult for them to believe that God still desires a relationship. Be sure to let your student know that this passage is speaking to a group of people whose behavior had been incredibly evil! Your student must understand that their rebellious or embarrassing past will not prevent God from giving them an exciting future. He is more concerned with their future than their past.

John 10:10 *"A thief comes only to rob, kill, and destroy. I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest."*

- Let the person know that Jesus came to give them a full life!

vs. 12-14 ----------

- **God's promises are always based on a premise.**

- *In these verses God gives* ***promises*** *and the* ***premise*** *that must be understood if the promise is to be fulfilled.*

? **What are some of the promises that God offers in this verse?**

- *I will listen to you*
- *You will find me*
- *I will rescue you*

? **What is the premise, the condition?** *(I will do this providing you...)*

- *You will find me when...*

you seek me with ALL your heart.

? **What does God mean when he asks you to "seek Him will all your heart"?** .

? **Ask ... What is something that you have sought after with "all your heart"?**

NOTE: This kind of *"seeking God"* is rare and probably foreign to your student. Helping them understand what it means to seek God with all their heart in a practical way is difficult but essential. It is safe to assume that while they have never committed to God in this way they have committed *whole heartily* to

letics, education, achievement, being popular, or to a dating relationship. Use whatever *"whole heart"* commitment they have made to clarify their understanding of what it means to seek God with all their heart.

? **How could someone tell that you were "seeking" _____ "with all your heart"?**

- *I t was my first priority*
- *I thought about it all the time*
- *I talked about it a lot*
- *I hung around people who shared the same goal or interest*
- *I sacrificed for it*
- *I persisted, refusing to give up*
- _____

? **How does seeking in that area relate to your seeking God?**

- *God wants me to seek Him like I sought* _____

Matthew 6:33 *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

NOTE: Jesus' promise to take care of our daily needs is predicated on our willingness to *"seek first God's kingdom and righteousness."*

? **We have discussed seeking first, that is "seeking with all your heart", but what do "his kingdom and righteousness" mean?**

To seek his kingdom means I seek his ruler-ship in my life; seeking his righteousness means I seek to do right the things he wants.

NOTE: Allowing Jesus to control your life is an exciting, positive thing. He wants to bless you, knows how to bless you, and has the resources to bless you. Jesus can and will bless your life *if* you will allow him to *"call the shots."* He can provide for you *if* you are committed to doing what he says. Remember God cannot bless that which he cannot control. This next verse discusses just how valuable Christ's ruler-ship is in our lives.

Matthew 13:44-46 ----------

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. [45]Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. [46] When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

? **What did this man have to sell in order to get the field?**

? **Why would anyone do what he did? Was it a sacrifice?**

? **What might this man's friends or family have thought about his radical actions?**

NOTE: This man sold everything because he knew that the treasure he had found was more valuable than all he had. In the end he comes out ahead. If he didn't put the treasure first, he would lose the treasure! If he did not "sellout" he would have missed out. Let your student know that others may think your new found priorities are over the top simply because they don't realize what a treasure you have found.

Acts 8:26-40 ----------

NOTE: Set the stage that in this passage we see God pulling Philip the Evangelist away from a very successful Samaritan revival, one that was reaching multitudes so that he could teach one individual. Why? I believe that God had a promise to keep: *"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you declares the Lord."* In this passage we find an incredible example of a *"with all your heart"* God seeker. This man can help move your student from concepts about seeking to practical application of those concepts. Before you read the text ask the person you're studying with to stop you when he/she notices something that shows that the Ethiopian was seeking God with "all his heart." Many times your student will see only the very obvious, if that. Let them know that you will add any seeker traits that they might miss. This may result in this part of the study being more of a monologue than a discussion. Be sure to emphasize personal application of this section. Your student must know how to be like the first century Eunuch in this century. Remember the goal is transformation not simply information.

- **Four traits from this Ethiopian God seeker that you can and should imitate.**

- **A "whole heart" seeker of God will...**

v. 27 ----------

1. ***Sacrifice to get close to God.***

- This 'God seeker" travels over 1000 difficult miles and will not get to enter the temple courts. (see Deuteronomy 23:1

? How could this trait show up in your life?

v. 28 ----------

Read / Study your bible (the verses we give you) on your own.

- Not just doing it as an assignment or requirement!
- Not just relying on a teacher's words or effort.

? How could this trait show up in your life?

vs. 31-34 ----------

Be humble enough to ask for help.

- "How can I..." "Come help me." Great Humility.
- More interested in becoming good than looking good.

? How could this trait show up in your life?

v. 36 ----------

4. ***Quickly do whatever God wants you to do.***

- Doesn't procrastinate – He does what he knows to do, now!
- Does in spite of the potential consequences

Note: This man had just come from Jerusalem where he would have been taught by the leaders of his tradition that Christ was a heretic and false teacher. He would also have been fully aware of the persecution of Christians that began and was centered in Jerusalem. Making God his number one priority was more important than holding to his tradition or personal comfort.

? **How could this trait show up in your life?**

NOTE: The eunuch was reading from Isaiah 53 as he traveled on his long journey. One could assume that the Ethiopian continued to read from Isaiah after his encounter with Phillip and conversion to Christ. If the assumption is correct, imagine how excited and honored he must have been to discover the following text only a few pages ahead of where he had been reading:

Isaiah 56:4-5 *"For this is what the LORD says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant-- [5]to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off."*

Acts 17:22-27 ----------

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. [23]For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. [24]"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. [25]And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. [26]From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. [27]God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us."

vs. 23-25 ----------

? **How could someone who was/is "very religious" not have a true relationship with God?**

- *By **not knowing** about the true God.*

  (god of our fathers = tradition)

- *By **not being willing to seek** Him out.*

vs. 26-27 ----------

? **What did Paul think was the reason those in the Areopagus had been given the opportunity to hear his message?**

- ***God wanted a relationship*** *with them & was giving them an* ***opportunity to seek*** *Him.*

  2 Peter 3:9

NOTE: Paul did not think that his presence at the Athens was an accident or coincidence; he believed God arranged it!

? **Why do you think that we met?**

- ***God wants a relationship*** *with YOU & is giving YOU an* ***opportunity to seek and find*** *Him.*

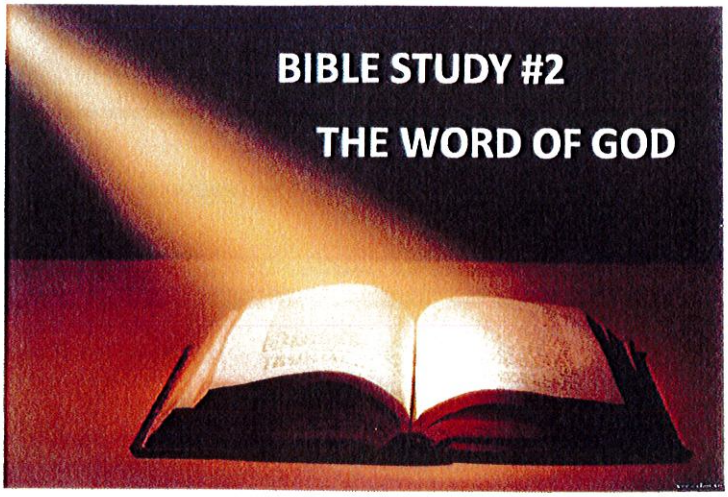
CLOSE EACH STUDY BY CALLING THE STUDENT TO A...

COMMITMENT AND A CHALLENGE.

COMMITMENT: Will you commit to being a *"with all your heart God seeker"*?

CHALLENGE: Set the date and time to study again. _____?

Study Goals:



- *To help your student understand that **the Bible is from God** (inspired) and is not just any book.* (2 Timothy 3:16a, 2 Peter 1:19-21)
- *To show the Bible's purpose, that it is **"useful"** and relevant to their life and problems.* (2 Timthy 3:15-17, Hebrews 4:12-13)
- *To help the student see the result of **ignoring, rejecting, or replacing it with human tradition**.* (John 12:47-50, 1Timothy 4:16)
- *To create a commitment to **knowing and obeying** the word of God.* (James 1:22-25, Acts 17:10-12)

2 Timothy 3:15-17 ----------

"...from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16]All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, [17]so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

v. 15 ----------

? **How does this passage say that Timothy was able to know about his salvation?**

NOTE: The Bible says that by knowing the scriptures Timothy could know about his salvation. One's relationship with God must be based on objective truth (*"the holy scriptures"*), not subjective opinion (one's personal feelings). The Apostle John says basically the same thing in the following verse.

1 John 5:13 *"I am writing this to you so that you may know that you have eternal life..."*

? **Are you certain that you and God are "OK" (If you died today, would you go to heaven)?**

? **What reason would you give for your answer?**

? **Is your answer based more on how you feel (emotion) or what God's word says (Scripture)?**

! ! ! Do a "Spiritual Time Line" Now ! ! !

NOTE: A *Spiritual Time Line* is a record of your student's religious experience. It will be used later, (to compare N.T. conversion with your student's conversion) but completing it now provides an unbiased record of your student's spiritual journey. Let your friend know that you are doing the time line so that they can compare what they did to be saved (become a Christ-follower) with what the scriptures teach. If the comparison matches up, GREAT! If not, then you can make adjustments to better correspond with God's word.

Born? Started going to church? Saved? Baptized?

v. 16 ----------

NOTE: Knowing what something is designed to do is essential to it being useful. That's why all cars, stereos, computers, etc. come with instruction manuals. The Bible is God's instruction manual to man. Paul tells Timothy (as well as you and me) what the bible is to be used for. It might be helpful to check out the New Living Translation's uncomplicated and concise take on 2 Timothy 3:16. For your student to fully benefit from the word of God, he or she must know what God designed His word to do.

? **What would you answer if asked, "What is the Bible designed to do?" or "What is it good for?"**

- **The Bible is "useful" (good) for...**

1. ***Teaching*** - What do you think this means?

   Providing new information

2. ***Rebuking*** - What does this mean?

   Pointing out errors in what I believe or do

NOTE: Rebuking is the red check mark the teacher puts on the students paper when the student misses it. It doesn't mean the teacher doesn't like the student; it just means that something needs to be addressed. Like a good teacher, the Bible uses rebukes (the red check mark on the paper) to lead us to the next important step.

3. ***Correcting*** - What do you think this means?

Showing me how to correct my errors, putting me on the right path, to align me with truth

4. ***Training in righteousness*** - What does this mean?

Providing the "how to" live on and stay on the right path

NOTE: Inform your student to expect one or more of these to occur during this Bible study. It is whata the Bible is designed to do. Encourage them not to panic or freak out when it happens but to simply allow God's word to do what it is intended to do.

v. 17 ----------

? **God made the Bible "useful for" these four things for a reason. What do you think He wants to happen as a result of our study?**

- ***To see your life changed*** *so that he can work in and through your life.*

2 Timothy 3:17 (NIV) *"...so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

2 Timothy 3:17 (Msg paraphrase) *"Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us."*

NOTE: Dream Teacher! It's never too early to cast a vision of what God wants to do with your student. He wants to save them and He wants to set them apart, equipped to serve and save others. Salvation is only the beginning! He has great plans for their life! Remind them of this before moving on to the next passage.

1 Timothy 4:16 ----------

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

? **What does Paul mean when he says "watch your life"?** (*"Keep a close watch on how you live..."* NLT)

? **What does Paul means when he says "watch your doctrine"?** (*"...and on your teaching."* NLT)

? **Which do you think is more important — life or doctrine?**

? **Which does the Apostle Paul seem to emphasize more?**

NOTE: BOTH ARE EQUALLY ESSENTIAL! Watching your *"life" (how you live)* **and** *"doctrine" (what you believe and teach)* is essential if you want to be saved and to save others.

- If a person's life is not right, people are not going to listen to his teachings. If his teaching is not right, they should not listen to them regardless of his life.

- Let your student know that the rest of the study will look at two major concerns of God — helping you understand the importance of **knowing** AND **doing** what is right.

Mark 7:5-9, 13 ----------

Isa. 29:13

The Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?" [6] He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. [7]They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.' [8]You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men." [9]And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!... [13]Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that."

? **What happens if we allow tradition to supersede truth?**

(Our worship to God becomes worthless)

? **How could this happen?**

- Our hearts get to the point where they are not pleasing to God.

- Human tradition becomes as important or more important than God's truth.

? **What can be done to make sure it doesn't happen to you?**

2 Peter 3:15-16 ----------

"Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. [16]He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

? **How does one "distort" something?**

? **What happens when we distort the scriptures? (Personal destruction!)**

? **Paul says that two kinds of people distort the scripture — the ignorant and the unstable. What does it mean to be "ignorant"?**

- Each of us is ignorant in one area or another. In some cases it doesn't matter. But, in the spiritual sphere, ignorance is *dangerous*. The good news is that ignorance can be replaced with information.

? **What does it mean to be "unstable"?**

- Unstable has to do with being undecided or double-minded. This problem can only be eliminated by a firm, heartfelt decision to embrace Christ's word and teachings above all else.

NOTE: If these two areas are not confronted in your life then distortion of *"hard"* <u>and</u> easy passages (*"...the other scriptures"*) is inevitable.

James 1:21b-25 ----------

"...humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. [22] Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. [23] Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror [24] and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. [25] But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does."

v. 21 ----------

? **What does being <u>*humble*</u> have to do with studying the Bible and being saved?**

- Being humble allows one to ***<u>admit faults</u>*** and admitting one's faults allows one to ***<u>get help.</u>***

? **Is just reading the word of God enough to insure that one will be blessed?**

- God's word <u>can</u> be a blessing if allowed to ***<u>penetrate and change</u>***. (verse 22 stresses this)

v. 22 ----------

? **How could reading, listening or studying the Bible cause one to be <u>deceived</u>?**

- It can trick one into believing that ***<u>knowing</u>*** what is right is the same as ***<u>doing</u>*** what is right.

vs. 23-24 ----------

? What's the point of looking *in a mirror?*

NOTE: The imagery of "*looking into a mirror and doing nothing*" is perfect to stress the uselessness of hearing the word of God but doing nothing with it. Who would get out of bed, look in a mirror, see their *less than impressive* appearance and go to work without making changes? Make sure the student knows that information without application is useless.

? What's the point of looking in the *mirror* of God's word?

- To see the areas that need addressed and to make the necessary changes

v. 25 ----------

? How can one make sure they are blessed from their time in the Word of God?

- By studying seriously and by "*doing what it says.*"

Matthew 7:24-27 "*Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.* [25] *The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.* [26] *But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.* [27] *The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."*

? What do the wise and foolish man have in common in this passage?

? What is different (besides the outcome of their houses)?

NOTE: The wise man <u>does</u> what God says while the fool "<u>does not</u>." The difference in salvation and destruction is trusting enough to obey. God gives us His word so that we can be protected and secure, both of which require us to do more than "just hear" or know the word.

Hebrews 4:12-13 ----------

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. [13] *Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."*

v. 12 ----------

? **What does the description *"living and active"* mean?**

- It is relevant to today's life and problems.

NOTE: The Bible is not like an out-of-date medical or science book. Its' message remains pertinent to today's problems. People tend to think of their problems as new and exceptional. In reality all *"modern problems"* are directly or indirectly dealt with in the Bible. The word of God has the answers for the person with whom you are studying. It can take care of their problems, directing them to a great life and greater eternity!

? **This passage says that the word of God is sharp and cutting. How do most feel about being cut?**

NOTE: No one likes to be cut, but *"purpose determines permission."* The following can illustrate this point to your student. Ask...If I were to pull out a hunting knife and ask, *"Would you let me make a 9 inch, really deep cut in your chest?"* you would (should) say *"no way!"* and then run. However your response would (should) be different if I were your trusted, skilled, and respected doctor and came to you in the hospital and asked, *"Can I do surgery? I will need to make a 9 inch cut in your chest. Your arteries are blocked and you need a bypass. It will be a painful surgery, but if we do it, you will live; if we don't, you will die."* You still wouldn't like it, but you would allow it. *"Purpose precedes Permission!"* *God is interested in changing your inside, not your outside. He is a cardiologist, not a cosmetic surgeon. All cardiologists have to cut their patients*.

? **What will happen if one refuses to be open to God and allow His word to cut/penetrate?**

- ***God will not be able to help you.***

- Much like a person who refuses to have surgery. ***I Die!***

v. 13 ----------

? **The Bible pictures God as a judge. What standard do you think he will use to judge you?**

- ***The word of God*** - not feelings, mom or dad's opinion, or religious tradition, or how you compare to others.

John 12:47-50 ----------

"As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. [48]There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. [49]For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. [50]I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

NOTE: During Jesus' 33 years on earth His purpose was not to pronounce judgment but to offer salvation. There will be a time when each of us will be judged as saved or condemned. Jesus said the *"word He spoke"* would be the ultimate and final standard.

? How can you make sure to avoid being condemned?

- Accept God's word as your standard of how to live and what to believe.

CLOSE THE STUDY BY CALLING THE STUDENT TO A ...

COMMITMENT AND A CHALLENGE

COMMITMENT: I commit to allow the word of God to be the only *authority on* how I will *live and* what I will *believe*.

CHALLENGE: *"Be a Berean"*?

Acts 17:11-12 *"Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. [12]Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men."*

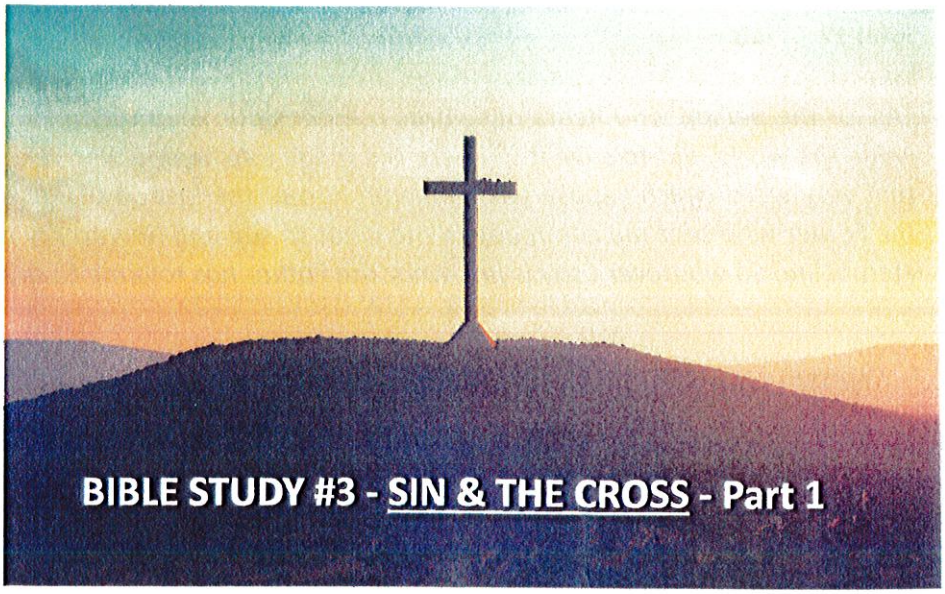
Like the Bereans I will be:

1. Eager to study. (Great time to set up the next study)

2. Careful to check the scriptures to confirm the accuracy of what you are told

3. Quick to obey any newly discovered truth

NOTE: It is usually best to do the *Sin and the Cross* study as two separate segments/studies. The sin study is rather long and the cross segment is short. Both are foundational (see 2 Cor. 5:14, 1 Cor. 15:10). Clearly communicating both segments is essential, so take whatever time is necessary. Remember — your goal is to make a disciple, not to complete a set of studies.



Study Goals:

- *To help your friend **know what sin is**.* (Romans 7:7, 1 John 3:4, Galatians 5:19-21, James 4:17)

- *To help show **what their sin does** to them (to anyone).* (Romans 7:8-25, Genesis 2:17, Isaiah 59:1-2, Romans 3:23)

  NOTE: Conviction and urgency are created by identifying, personalizing and showing the negative effects of sin/sinfulness.

- *To help your friend know **what their sin did** to Christ (and what Christ did to take care of their sin).* (Isaiah 53, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

  NOTE: Showing them how much Christ loves them is the first step to their loving and obeying God (see 1 Jn. 4:10, Jn.14:15, 2 Cor. 5:14). Remember to tell them what Jesus has done for them before you tell them what they need to do for Jesus.

- *To influence the student to follow Christ as they come to **realize the depth of God's love** for them.* (2 Corinthians 5:14, John 14:15)

Sin Segment

NOTE: Explain that today's study will use Romans 7 as a foundation. It's the jumping off point for the entire sin study. To ease transition to and from Romans you can have your student use a book mark.

Romans 7:7-25 ----------

v. 7 - *I would not have known what sin was except through the law.*

? **How can one determine if something is right or wrong?**

- In this verse Paul says that the only way he could do so was by looking at God's word, the Bible. He also says that this is also true for you and me.

? **How would you define the word/term sin?**

1 John 3:4 *"Everyone who sins breaks God's law, because sin is the same as breaking God's law."*

? **How does the Apostle John define sin in this passage?**

- John says that sin is the breaking any of God's laws. It doesn't matter what I think or feel, God's word is the ultimate and final identifier.

NOTE: Explain that you will now look at a couple of passages that list specific sins. Sin generally falls into one of two categories: *doing* the wrong things or *not doing* the right things. Remember the purpose of this segment is to help the student realize what sin is and that they are guilty of being a sinner.

Galatians 5:19-21 ----------

"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; [20] idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions [21] and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

NOTE: The student must see that he/she is a sinner if this study is to be successful. Make it clear that in God's eyes no one sin is bigger than another. **Sin is sin!** Accomplishing this will require you to go through Paul's list of sins, (you may want to use Mark 7:20-23 also) explaining each one (see appendix at end of this segment) and asking the student about specific struggles or involvement. This might be awkward but it is necessary. Being open with *your* sin struggles can make it easier for your student to be open with theirs. Be open, remembering that student and teacher are included in the *"all"* of Romans 3:23 as you ask the following questions.

? **Do you know what _____ is?**

? **Have you struggled with _____?**

? **Which, if any of these, are a surprise or shock to you?**

? **What do you think God was trying to prove by placing *orgy* next to *getting drunk*, or placing *being a witch* in the same sentence as *hating someone*?**

- God wants us to know that ***sin is sin.*** It is never *"my sin is bigger or littler than your sin."* It is always, *"my sin is the **same** as your sin."*

- God wants us to see that all sin is ***destructive.*** "Big sin" and "little sin," have the ***same effect*** if not dealt with.

NOTE: After carefully walking your student through Galatians 5 (and Mark 7?) you are ready to proceed to "sin category 2" the **right things we don't do.** (Omit rather than commit)

James 4:17 ----------

"Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it."

? **Have you ever known the "right thing to do" but didn't do it for whatever reason?**

- If so, you have sinned... and welcome to the club. You are a sinner!

BOTTOM LINE:

Romans 3:23 *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

NOTE: In the first part of the study we have tried to show what sin is. The purpose of the next segment is to show what sin DOES to the sinner if it is not dealt with. It is helpful to illustrate the effects of sin with a drawing like the following one. Start by re-creating the blank illustration below. As you identify (from Romans 7) what sin does (each effect) your list should look similar to the completed one.

YOUR FRIEND'S NAME		GOD
DECEIVED	S	ENLIGHTENED
DEAD	I	ALIVE
ENSLAVED	N	FREED
HOPELESS		HOPEFUL
LOST		SAVED

YOUR FRIENDS NAME		GOD
_____		_____
_____	S	_____
_____	I	_____
_____	N	_____
_____		_____

v. 11a ---------- ***SIN...DECEIVED ME.***

Sin is dangerously deceptive!

NOTE: Explain that sin is so deceptive that it can destroy one's life before it is ever recognized as evil. Adam and Eve sinned because they were deceived by Satan. He was and is a master deceiver and now he wants to deceive you!

v. 11b ---------- ***SIN...PUT ME TO DEATH.***

Sin causes the one who sins to die.

? What does the author mean when he said, *"I died"*?

- The original Biblical language — ***"to separate"***

  (Our language too, *"That relationship is dead."*)

NOTE: Let your student know that the Bible consistently stresses that sin kills and separates man from God. This concept is found in the beginning of the Bible (Genesis), the middle of the Bible (Isaiah), and toward the end of the Bible (Romans). The following passages reinforce this. Cover each passage stressing that when one is separated from God, they are separated from the blessings of God. God deeply longs to bless your student but their sin will obstruct His ability to bless.

- This death/separation concept is seen through all the Bible. You can let your friend know that we will be looking at three passages that convey this truth: one in Genesis (the beginning), one in Isaiah (the middle), and one in Romans (toward the end).

Genesis 2:16-17 *"The LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*

? Did Adam or Eve die *physically* when they ate the fruit?

- Not physically, yet the bible says they died at that moment.

? In what way did sin "kill" Adam and Eve?

- They were ***separated*** from God and separated from His blessings as they were forced out of the garden.

Isaiah 59:1-2 *"Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. [2] But your iniquities <u>have</u> <u>separated</u> <u>you</u> from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."*

? **These people thought that God was too old or too weak to save them. What was the *real* reason God was not helping them?**

- Their "iniquities" (sin) had ***separated*** them from God. Their ***sin*** had made God turn away and refuse to listen or assist them.

Romans 6:23 ----------

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

? **What are wages?**

- The pay one receives for what one does.

? **What wage is God going to pay out to you and me for our sin if it is not taken care of?**

NOTE: In Romans 7 Paul is painting a picture of sin's destructive nature. In the next verse (13), Paul blurts out the major point of this sin study. Incredible things will happen if you can help your student grasp and personalize Paul's (and Christ's) attitude toward sin.

v. 13b ———— **"so that... *SIN MIGHT BECOME UTTERLY SINFUL*"**

Sin is utterly sinful (very evil - NCV)

? **What do you think Paul is trying to communicate when he uses these redundant words?**

? **Do you think most people believe that "sin" is totally evil?**

NOTE: In Romans 7 Paul mentions several of sin's damaging consequences. His purpose in doing this is to help people see how bad sin really is. People often take "sin" very lightly. You must help your student grasp the destructive, dangerous nature of sin. In the next scripture, Jesus' graphic imagery will help accomplish this. The words of Jesus from Matthew 5 reinforces Paul's point.

Matthew 5:27-30 ----------

"If your right eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away. It is better to lose one part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. [30] *If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."*

? **Is this verse to be taken literally? Do you think Jesus wants a bunch of one-eyed one-handed followers?**

- **Of course not!** The problem with lust and stealing is a ***heart / mind*** problem, not an ***eye / hand*** problem. Any healthy American male can lust with one eye!

? **What point is Jesus trying to make?**

- Sin must be viewed as very serious! Remember it is extremely deceptive and *destructive!!!*

- If we don't have a radical view of sin it will deceive and *separate us from God and God's blessings!*

v. 14 ---------- ***"I am... sold as a SLAVE TO SIN"***

Sin Enslaves

? **What do you think Paul meant when he describes himself as "a slave to sin"?**

- In the beginning we <u>choose</u> our desires and habits, but in the end we are <u>controlled</u> by our desires and habits.

Proverbs 5:22 *"The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast."*

Romans 6:16 *"Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey-whether you are slaves to sin, which <u>leads</u> <u>to</u> <u>death</u>, or to obedience, which <u>leads</u> <u>to</u> <u>righteousness</u>."*

NOTE: Paul is saying that we cannot choose <u>if</u> we have a master, only <u>which</u> master. By choosing our master we choose our fate.

v. 24 ---------- ***"What a WRETCHED man I am"----------***

Sin destroys hope

v. 24-25 *"...who will RESCUE me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

Jesus Christ

- Paul understood that the solution to his and our sin problem involves a relationship with Jesus Christ.

- He also understood that he had to make a choice.

NOTE: This is a good time to refer to the *"Wall of Sin"* illustration/drawing. Remind your student that Jesus came to take care of his/her sin problem. Let them know that more than anyone, Jesus knows how destructive sin is and He longs to protect you from it. Let your friend know that the next segment will deal with what Jesus did to establish the relationship that can "rescue" us from sin's death sentence.

APPENDIX

Contemporary Explanations/Definitions of the *"acts of the sinful nature"*

Sexual Immorality: Having sex with someone other than your spouse. This includes homosexuality, having sex before marriage, beastiality and a wide range of other sexual activity.

Impurity: Lust, Porno, 900 numbers, Dirty magazines, etc., a broad term covering many areas.

Debauchery: Out of control, excessive sensually, dirty dancing, dressing in sleazy clothes.

Idolatry: False gods, anything you place above God... girlfriend/boyfriend, sports, television, etc.

Witchcraft: The occult, the use of drugs or alcohol to escape or to alter your thought process.

Hatred: Detesting someone, mean feelings/actions directed toward another, passionate dislike.

Discord: Having a bad attitude, acting on your hate, difficult to get along with.

Jealousy: Being angry or resentful toward someone because they possess something that you do not.

Fits of Rage: Throwing a fit, losing control, a temper tantrum.

Selfish Ambition: Self-centered, looking to personal interests at other's expense, self-promotion, pride.

Dissension: Arrogance that causes clicks, thinking that your group is better than everyone else's.

Factions: Cliquish, segregationist, being part of a group that causes trouble, gangs

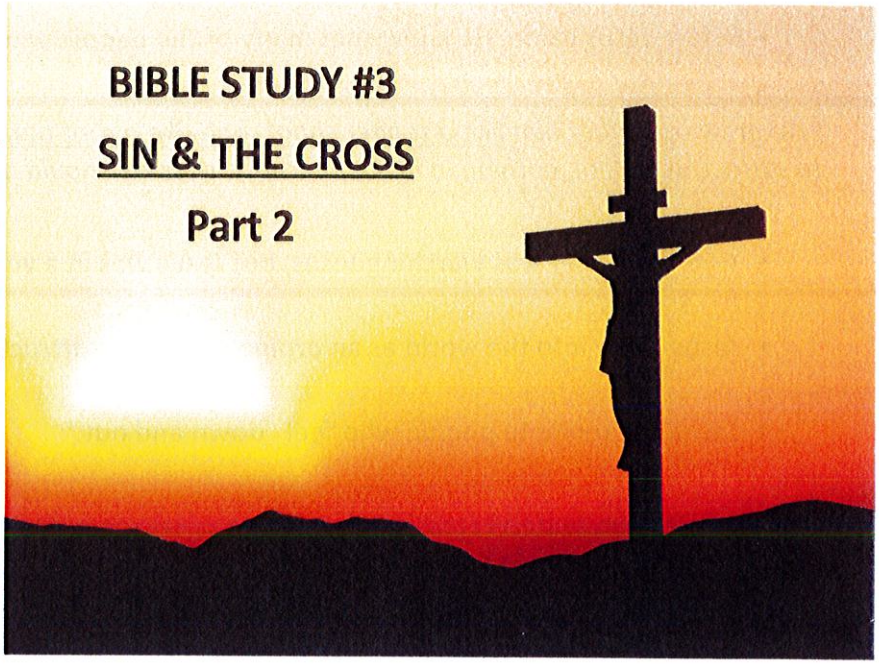
Envy: Being mad when something good happens to someone else, being resentful.

Drunkenness: Getting high from beer or drugs, impaired state.

Orgies: A wild party, stuff that happens at a wild party such as drinking, drugs, or sex.

And the Like: Things that are close, similar to the things listed above.

THE CROSS SEGMENT



In this, the 2nd segment of the *Sin and the Cross* study your focus will be on what our sin did to Jesus and what He did to rescue us from sin's destructive consequences. The study simply reveals Christ's love by looking at the price Christ paid for our sin. Explain to your student that Isaiah 53 is a foundation of the "cross" study like Romans 7 was for the "sin" segment.

In the next study, Discipleship, you will call your student to make a radical, life-changing commitment. The difficult decision to follow Christ requires a strong *compelling* motivation. Christ's love for the student is that compelling motivation (see 2 Corinthians 5:14). **Before you tell the student what they need to do for Jesus (discipleship) make sure that you have clearly told them what Jesus did for them.**

Also be aware that the nature of this segment will require you to do more of the talking. During "The Cross" study you will read all of Isaiah 53 two times. In the first reading you will explain the passage in a general way (what it meant to the eunuch of Acts 8 and the Jews). The second reading is all about personal application. The intent is to make the student feel both guilt and gratitude; guilt for causing Christ's death and gratitude for the incredible and personal love of God.

In the second reading it is especially vital that you read slowly and clearly. Isaiah 53 allows you to *"preach Christ and Him crucified"* (1 Corinthians 1:23, 2:2) in a very personalized way. To communicate Christ's love effectively it is essential that you connect with the emotion of the passage. The key to this connection is a personal understanding of Christ's love for you and your student. In the days before the study take the time to study, meditate and pray about the passages in this segment of the study. Do not begin the study until you have reflected on the passages in a personal manner!

Remember to explain the context of this passage before you begin to read it. Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus was written approximately 1000 years before his birth. Isaiah 53 shows that the cross was not an accident but a part of God's plan. You can also remind the student that this is the same scripture that the Ethiopian eunuch was reading when he encountered Philip and subsequently became a follower of Christ. The conversion of the Eunuch clearly demonstrates that the truths contained in Isaiah 53 have the power to propel the God-seeker through any excuse and every obstacle they may face in becoming a Christ follower. Know the passage well!

Isaiah 53 – First Reading

v. 1-3 -- Points to make:

"Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

- Before Jesus came, He knew that many of the people would not even believe what He had to say.

[2] *He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.*

- God the father was watching Jesus, but Jesus was in a ***vulnerable*** position.
- Jesus came into the world as an ***ordinary, even unattractive person*** — not a superstar.
- Jesus can relate to people who feel "down and out."

[3] *He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not."*

- Jesus knew that the people (you and me) would reject Him and even be ***ashamed*** of Him.
- I have at times been ashamed of Jesus (give personal examples). Have you?
- Could the Ethiopian Eunuch relate to Jesus' feelings of rejection? Yes! And Jesus could understand how the eunuch felt!

v. 4-6 -- Points to make:

[4] *Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.*

- Even though Jesus realized how people would treat Him, He still came to ***save*** them.
- The Jewish people thought that Jesus was cursed by God (see Deuteronomy 21:23) and that He was getting what He deserved for His crimes.

[5] *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

- Jesus was not receiving the punishment for His sin; He was receiving punishment for our mankind's sin.

[6] *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

- Even while Jesus was ***loving*** like that... they (we) didn't care!
- And Jesus still willingly paid ***the price...*** for their (our) sin.

v. 7-9 -- Points to make:

[7] He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

- Lambs were not slaughtered because they were guilty. They were slaughtered because of someone else's guilt. In the O.T. they were sacrificed for the sins of people (Ex. 12:21).

[8] By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

- Jesus would never have any children (physically). The eunuch of Acts 8 could relate to this pain.

[9] He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

- This specific prophecy was fulfilled and is verifiable. A reason to believe that the Bible is not just another book.

v. 10 -- Points to make:

[10] Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

NOTE: At this point it can be beneficial to look at the N.T. fulfillment of this passage; the crucifixion. **(Matthew 27:22-50)** The N.T. reveals that Jesus experienced *physical*, *emotional*, and *spiritual* pain for those He would redeem. Communicating this can allow "*the love of Christ to compel*" your student.

Physical Pain:

- v. 26 *"...But he had Jesus flogged..."* Jesus was flogged 39 lashes with a *'flagrum'* - A leather whip with bone chips, rock and iron woven into it. Many died during this process.

- v. 29 *"...twisted a crown of thorns and set in on his head."*

- v. 35 *"When they had Crucified him..."* Jesus was nailed at a pressure point in the wrist (considered part of the hand)

Emotional Pain:

- v. 22-23 *"Crucify him!"...* He was rejected.
- v. 29 *"...and mocked him. Hail, king of the Jews!"*
- v. 30-31 *"They spit on him, took the staff and struck him."*
- v . 39-44 *"...hurled their insults at him..."*
- v. 50 *"with a loud voice he dies..."*

Spiritual Pain:

- v. 46 *"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"*
- It was God's will that Jesus be ***"crushed."***
- God's just nature demands that sin be paid for. Jesus death was the price for our ***"guilt!"***

v. 11-12 -- Points to make:

[11] After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

- Isaiah foresaw that something would occur after Jesus' death that would make it worthwhile; something would "satisfy" Him.
- People choosing to embrace Him and accept His forgiveness would make His death meaningful and satisfying.

[12] Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Isaiah 53 – Second Reading

NOTE: To make the passage personal read the text, substituting *Jesus* in place of "He" and the person's name in place of "we," "man," "our," and "us."

"Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

[2] Jesus grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. Jesus had no beauty or majesty to attract _____ to Jesus, nothing in Jesus appearance that _____ should desire him.

[3] Jesus was despised and rejected by _____, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom _____ hide their faces he was despised, and _____ esteemed him not."

- This prophecy has been fulfilled with many people, even Christians being ashamed or embarrassed about Christ and his teachings.

[4] Surely Jesus took up _____ infirmities and carried _____ sorrows, yet _____ considered Jesus stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

[5] But Jesus was pierced for _____ transgressions, Jesus was crushed for _____ iniquities; the punishment that brought _____ peace was upon him, and by Jesus wounds _____ is (can be) healed. _____, like sheep, have gone astray, _____ has turned to his/her own way; and the LORD has laid on Jesus the iniquity of _____."

- Let your student know the following — Jesus knew that he/she might not accept Him because they might want to do their own thing. He loved them so much, though, that He died to at least give them a chance.

[7] Jesus was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so Jesus did not open his mouth.

[8] By oppression and judgment Jesus was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of _____ he was stricken.

[9] Jesus was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

[10] Yet it was the LORD's will to crush Jesus and cause Jesus to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, Jesus will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in Jesus hand.

[11] After the suffering of his soul, Jesus will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify _____, and he will bear _____ iniquities.

[12] Therefore I will give Jesus a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because Jesus poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For Jesus bore the sin of _____, and made intercession for the _____.

CLOSING QUESTIONS?

? Isaiah (v.10) states that it was *"Gods will"* for Jesus to suffer. Why would He want this for His Son?

- Because God *loves you and wants a relationship with you.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *"God made him no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might be the righteousness of God.*

- God gave Jesus and Jesus sacrificed Himself so we could have a relationship with the Father!

? Verse eleven (of Isaiah 53) implies that your response can provide Christ a sense of satisfaction about his suffering on the cross. How do you think you can do that?

- Jesus will be satisfied if you commit your life to ***follow Him*** (like the Ethiopian).

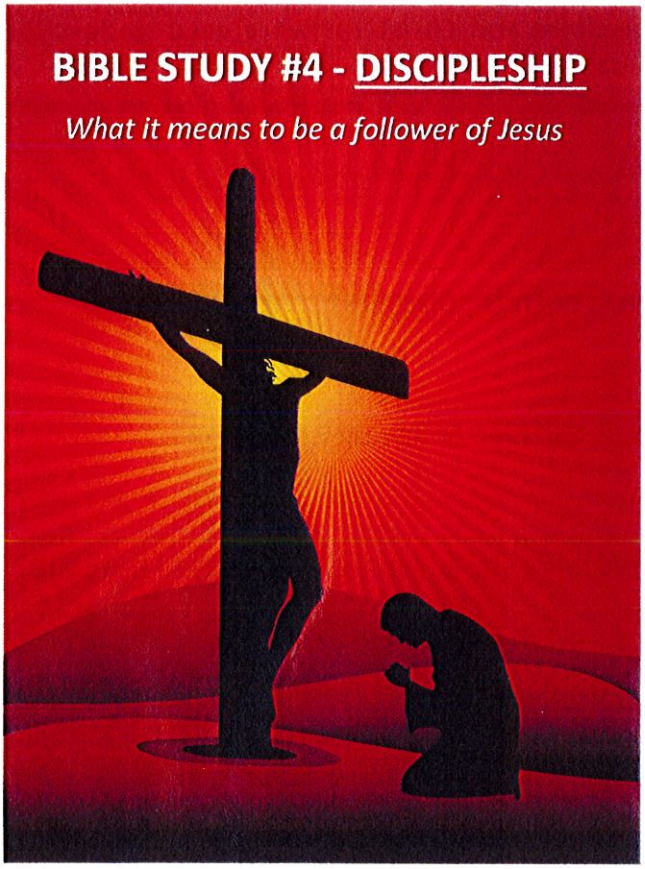
- You can also make it "all for nothing" as far as you are concerned by rejecting Jesus.

CLOSE EACH STUDY BY CALLING THE STUDENT TO A...

COMMITMENT AND A CHALLENGE.

COMMITMENT: Will you in gratitude, commit to take a radical approach to dealing with sin in your life?

CHALLENGE: Be *open and honest* with your personal sin struggles. Openness allows God to forgive you and other followers of Christ to help you.



Study Goals:

- *To help the student know what a disciple is.* Definition — actual and practical (Acts 11:26, Lk. 6:40)
- *To help the student understand what a disciple does.* The marks/proofs of a Disciple (John 12:47-50, John 13:34-35, John 15:1-9)
- *To show that these traits are the "spiritual DNA" of a true disciple and that these proofs are found in baby disciples.* (Acts 2:38-47)
- *To help the student grasp the depth and seriousness of the commitment to which Christ calls them.* (Luk e 14)

? **What do you think of when hear the following words: ... Christian? ... Disciple? ... Church?**

Acts 11:25- 26 *"Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, [26]and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."*

NOTE: Many people (not all) believe that these words represent three different individuals/groups and three distinct levels of commitment. They see the church as a place to go and often think that a disciple is more highly committed (and rare) than a Christian. The problem this creates is that if someone thinks that the term disciple doesn't apply to them, they will read over the term and its expectations without any personal application or expectation. The truth is the Bible uses these terms to describe the same individual(s). ***"Christian"*** is a 'Roman style' word to describe those who follow Christ; the ***"Church"*** is the saved people of God (Heb. 12:23), his collection of followers; and Christ's 'term of endearment' for his followers was ***"Disciple"*** (a term he overwhelmingly used). By the completion of this study your student should know that all saved individuals are called to the same character and level of commitment. When Jesus describes the character and commitment of a disciple, He is describing the commitment and character for a Christian and the desired makeup of those within His church. This study will look at, from Jesus words, what it means to be a disciple, which is a Christian, and a member of His church.

? **From this verse does it appear that the term disciples and Christians were used to describe different or the same individuals?**

? **How many times do you think the Bible calls followers of Christ, Christians? *... Only 3 times***

? **How many times do you think the Bible calls followers of Christ, Disciples? *... About 120 times***

? **Does this verse alter your understanding of the words Christian or disciple? If so, how?**

? **Why would Jesus use this particular word so often? Is there any lesson you should learn from this?**

- Jesus wants you to be clear on this word / concept!
- Explain the concept of overlooking a word that one does not think applies. (See preceding "Note") Let your student know that understanding the word disciple and its implications is essential if they want to be a follower of Christ.

? **Where does the word "church" fit into this?**

WHAT A DISCIPLE IS

Luke 6:40 *"A student (disciple) is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher."*

NOTE: Explain that the word Luke uses for *student* (mathetria) is the same word that is used in other places we will study. (John 8:31, 13:35, 15:8, Luke 14:26) In these other texts, the word is translated as *disciple*, but it is the same word, with the same meaning. In the Greek language the word disciple was used to describe a student who is striving to become like his or her teacher. It involved more than learning his teachings; it involved becoming like the teacher. The great Greek teachers in every field had disciples, that is, students who were trying to become like them.

? **Can you think of a word in your vocabulary that conveys this meaning or concept?**

Apprentice and Intern convey a very similar thought.

NOTE: You have already stated that this study will look at Jesus' description/definition of a disciple. The Gospel of John reveals three clear characteristics of a disciple. Explain that in this study we will examine those marks in John's writings and then flip to Acts 2 to see these same characteristics in the lives of a group of *new* believers. The purpose in this is to let the student know that these marks are the characteristics of all disciples not just mature followers of Jesus. It is true that the marks should be *more* evident and *defined* in the mature disciple. But, they are also seen in a young, *baby* Christian. Adult men and women have more defined characteristics than infants, but they do not have different ones. Acts 2 confirms that these marks of a disciple are the DNA of a believer, present in any true follower of Jesus.

WHAT A DISCIPLE DOES ..... (3 CHARACTERISTICS)

TRAIT #1 ----- *A disciple "Holds to the Teachings of Jesus"*

John 8:31 *"If you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth with set you free."*

? **What does it mean to "hold to the teaching?"**

? **What does it mean if a husband or wife "holds to" his or her vows?**

- In both cases it means that the person does what they say they are going to do. The New Century Version makes this very clear. *"So Jesus said to the Jews who believed in Him, "If you continue to obey my teaching, you are truly my followers.""*

? **Can you "hold to" a "teaching" if you do not know it?**

? **Can you know a "teaching" and not "hold to it"?**

- A disciple is committed to both knowing and holding!

Acts 2:42 *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching..."*

? **How long had these people been Christians**? (Acts 2:41)

? **What do you think we should learn from this?**

- A commitment to knowing Christ's teaching and obeying His teaching begins immediately.

•**1 John 2:3-6** *"We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. [4] The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. [5] But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: [6] Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did."*

TRAIT #2----- ***A disciple "Loves One Another"***

John 13:34-35*"And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. [35]If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."*

? **Who is the "one another" that a disciple is called to love?**

- It is the other disciples/Christians/the Church. It is not loving the people in the world, even though we are commanded to love them. This love for our fellow disciples is evidence to the world that we are authentic Christ-followers.

- If you make a commitment to become a disciple of Jesus, you are committing to become a lover of other disciples; a lover of the church.

Acts 2:44-47 *"All the believers were together and had everything in common. [45] Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. [46] Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together...."*

? **How did the disciples love for each other show up?**

- They were united.
- They shared their possessions.
- They met together consistently to continue their learning about God.
- They spent time at each other's homes.

? **How will loving like Christ show up in your relationship with other disciples?**

1 John 3:16-18 *"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. [17] If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? [18] Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."*

NOTE: Before moving on to the next point, clearly communicate that loving other disciples involves a commitment to being and sharing together. Church attendance, fellowship and sharing are a consistent part of a disciple's life.

TRAIT #3----- ***A disciple "Bears Fruit"***

John 15:5-8 *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. [2] He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. [3] You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. [4] Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. [5] "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [6] If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned... [8] This is to my Father's glory, that you* ***bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.***"

? **What does it mean to "bear fruit"?**

NOTE: Explain that there are two distinct, interconnected, types of Christian fruit.

#1..... The Fruit of the Spirit – A changed life!

Galatians 5:22-23 *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness and self-control."*

Explain that the fruit of a changed life is essential if a disciple wants to produce the second kind of fruit.

2 Cor. 3:18

#2..... The Fruit of Reproduction – A life that changes lives!

Philippians 1:22-23 *"If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! [23] I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith..."*

Explain that oranges produce oranges, grapes produce grapes, and disciples produce disciples.

Mark 1:16-18 *"Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men."*

Matthew 28:18-20 *"Go into all the world and make disciples."*

Luke 19:10 *"I came to seek and save the lost."*

- Being like Christ means choosing to be concerned with reaching the lost. A disciple will be a "fisher of men."

NOTE: Before moving on, reiterate the connection between a changed life (having the fruit of the Spirit in one's life) and the ability to influence others. If God does not make a difference in my life others will not be interested in my message. Remind your student of 1 Timothy 4:16.

Acts 2:46-47 *"... And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*

- Once again we see the baby disciples of Acts 2 possessing the disciples DNA.

THE COMMITMENT OF A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

NOTE: This final section is a call to commitment. Jesus said if one is unwilling to radically commit to Him, they could *not* be His disciple. **Remember your goal is to produce a disciple not complete a study. Baptism is not the goal, being like Christ is.** Even at this point in the studies, it is important to remember that "it's about the death not the dunk!" Jesus was always honest with the commitment He expected and He wants you to do the same. No "bait and switch."

Luke 14:25-34 *"Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: [26] "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. [27] And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. [28] "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? [29] For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, [30] saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' [31] "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? [32] If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. [33] In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."*

? **What is Jesus trying to communicate when He uses the term "hate" in regard to one's relationship?**

- While it is obvious that He does not mean to literally hate, Jesus uses the Greek word for hate to make a point. He wants us to know that He will not be second on our priority list. He is "Lord of all" or not Lord at all.

? **Which individual (s) mentioned pose the biggest threat to you making Christ your most significant relationship?**

NOTE: Often the person will mention wife/children while ignoring the command to subjugate self. It is important that you make them aware of the need to include *self* in this examination of competing relationships.

? **Why does Jesus bring up the cost counting illustrations of building a tower and facing an army?**

- It is easy to get into a relationship without really considering its <u>cost</u>. When the unexpected cost surfaces, it is also easy to bale on the relationship. Many individuals don't like commitments. We like the idea of *friends with benefits*. Jesus demands that we be more than friends. He demands that we be His surrendered followers. He demands this because He wants to protect, bless and use us. Jesus cannot protect or bless anyone who will not give control of their life to Him. The "terms" that King Jesus gives to anyone looking for peace are ***<u>complete surrender</u>***.

NOTE: The following illustration can help your student identify and admit where they are in their commitment to Christ. It is a very useful and powerful tool in which to close! Explain that all humans can be grouped into one of three circles when it comes to their relationship to Christ. Instruct them that you want him/her to listen as you draw circles and describe these three groups.

- **Draw the illustration explaining the circles as you go.**

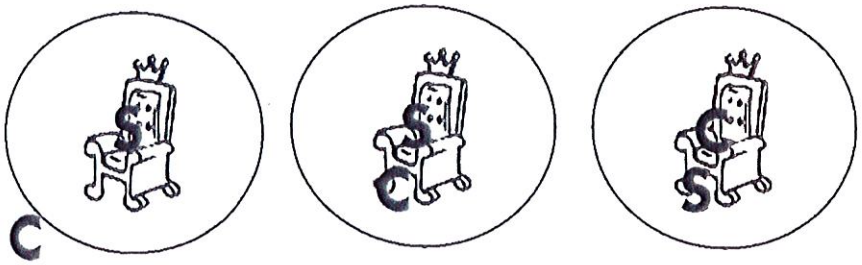
#1 – You are (Self) on the throne and Jesus has no real influence in your daily life and decisions.

#2 – You are (Self) on the throne but you yield some of your daily life and decisions to Christ. You know who Jesus is but ultimately when push comes to shove, you call the shots.

#3 – Jesus is on the throne and His will consistently influences your daily life and every decision you make.

? **Which of the following circles best represents <u>a disciple</u>?**

? **Which circle best represents <u>where you are</u> now in your relationship to Christ?**

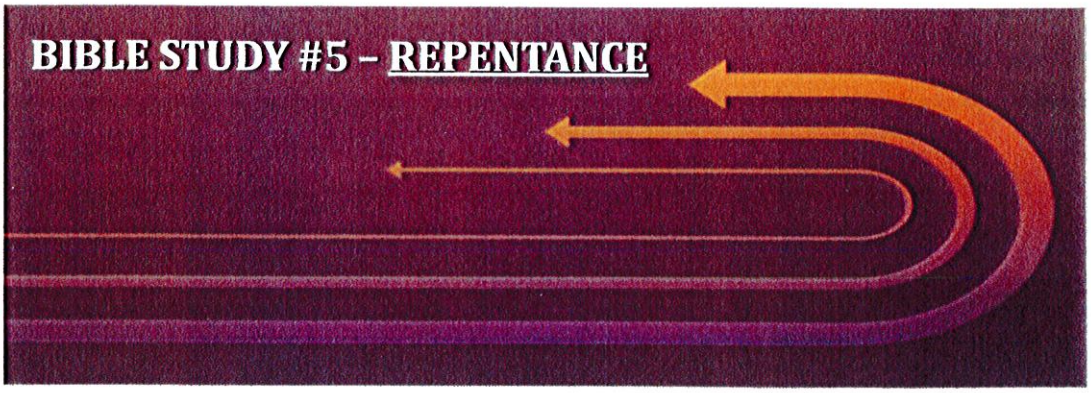


CLOSE EACH STUDY BY CALLING THE STUDENT TO A... <u>COMMITMENT</u> AND A <u>CHALLENGE</u>.

<u>COMMITMENT</u>: Will you do whatever it takes to get Jesus on the throne?

<u>CHALLENGE</u>: Begin to do your best to display all the marks of a disciple. Study your bible, be committed to the church (attending, giving, encouraging, etc.), and begin to reach out to those around you.

BIBLE STUDY #5 – REPENTANCE



Study Goals:

- *To convey what repentance is and that it is a prerequisite to salvation/ baptism. (**"Turn or burn"** stated in a tactless way.)* (Luke 13:3, Acts 17:30-31)
- *Clarify that repentance involves **being sorry,** but it is much **more than** just being sorry.* (2 Corinthians 7:8-11, Acts 26:19-20)

REPENTANCE – *What is it?*

? **What do think of when you hear the word "repent?"**

NOTE: After asking this initial question, let your student know that this study will be devoted to explaining repentance. "Repent" has become a "christianese" word that is rarely used in everyday conversations. Your role in this study is to explain repentance in a practical, biblical way and to expose common misunderstandings about repentance. Biblical repentance is ***a change of mind/heart that leads to*** *a change of behavior.* Begin by reading the following passage together. The NCV is included for your benefit, to help you explailn the background and meaning of the passage. *It can be helpful to read the NCV out loud to help clearly define the concept for your student.*

Luke 13:1-5 *"Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. [2] Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? [3] I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. [4] Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? [5] I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."*

Luke 13:1-5 (NCV) *"At that time some people were there who told Jesus that Pilate had killed some people from Galilee while they were worshipping. He mixed their blood with the blood of the animals they were sacrificing to God. [2] Jesus answered, "Do you think this happened to them because they were more sinful than all others from Galilee? [3] No, I tell you. But unless you change your hearts and lives, you will be destroyed as they were! [4] What about those eighteen people who died when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think they were more sinful than all the others who live in Jerusalem? [5] No, I tell you. But unless you change your hearts and lives, you will all be destroyed too!"*

? **Does Jesus seem to view repentance as optional or essential?**

NOTE: Explain that Jesus was speaking to *"good"* people who thought that bad things were happening to others due to their *sinfulness.* Jesus is trying to make these "good" people realize that a disastrous fate awaits *them* and *anyone* who is unwilling to have a change of mind that leads to a change of action. The choice that God gives each of us is simple: repent or die.

? **Why do you think Jesus would say the same thing twice?**

- It is very important that you and I understand the significance of repentance.
- The choice is obvious and serious: "repent" or "perish".
- One cannot be saved without repentance. No exceptions!

NOTE: The following passage is good to read to clarify the essentials of repentance before moving on in the study. The message is simple... Repent of _____ or risk God's judgment!

Acts 17:30-31 *"In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. [31] For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice..."*

? **What fate awaits the person who refuses to repent?**

- They will face God's judgment.
- One cannot afford to be "ignorant" about repentance.

REPENTANCE – *How it Shows Up in Life*

Acts 26:15-20 *"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. [16] 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. [17] I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them [18] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified* ***by faith*** *in me.' [19] "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. [20] First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds."*

NOTE: Make sure you explain the background of the passage. Let your friend know that the Apostle Paul had at one time hated Christ and persecuted them. However, Paul had a radical change of heart and mind that led to a radical change of his behavior. Explain that in this passage Paul is sharing his new found faith by telling King Agrippa the story of how he became a disciple and what God called him to do.

? **What assignment was given to Paul?**

"I am sending you to them [18] to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God..."

? **In verse 20 Paul tells that he accomplished his task through preaching? What was his message to the people?**

"I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds."

? **What would happen if the people Paul preached to responded correctly to his message?**

"...that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

- Simply stated they would ***be saved*** .

NOTE: This is a good time to mention that repentance is simply an act of faith. If Paul's audience truly believed his message, repentance would be a natural outcome. Repentance is simply a manifestation of life changing faith.

? **What does Paul's message to Agrippa say to you?**

- If you are to receive the "forgiveness of sins," you must commit to changing your *life's direction. You must repent.*

NOTE: The next passage is designed to make it completely clear that repentance requires life change. Being "sorry" is not enough. Once again it is essential that you explain the background of this passage. Explain that the Corinthian church had a member who was committing incest by having sex with his mom/step-mom. Originally the church did nothing, thinking that they were being gracious, accepting and non-judgmental. God, through Paul, sent the church a letter telling them to confront the man who was doing this. Paul's God-inspired, hard-hitting letter to the church hurt their feelings but saved their souls. He told them that by doing nothing about the man's sin they were aiding Satan, dooming the sinner, and endangering their own souls. (See I Corinthians 5 for specifics.) Paul plainly called the people to repent, to be sorry enough to change. The church responded and in doing so left us with some valuable lessons about repentance.

2 Corinthians 7: 8-11 *"Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— [9] yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. [10]* ***Godly sorrow*** *brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but* ***worldly sorrow*** *brings death. [11] See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter."*

? **Why was Paul sorry, then happy about making the Corinthians sorry**?

- Hurting them was not Paul's goal, ***helping*** them was. ***Helping*** them required ***hurting*** them.
- It was better for them to hurt now, for a short time, rather than be lost forever in Hell.
- Paul was happy because *"they became sorry as God intended."*

NOTE: There is a way of being sorry that is *not* pleasing to God. One must have the right kind of sorrow.

? **Paul mentions two kinds of sorrow - what are they?**

- *Godly* sorrow and *Worldly* sorrow

? **What do you think worldly sorrow is?**

- Sorry I got ***caught.***
- Sorry, but not sorry enough to ***change.***
  - Like the Devil, sorry enough to tremble but not enough to turn.

James 2:19 *"Do you believe that there is only one God? Good! The demons also believe—and tremble with fear."*

- It's demonic to *claim to believe* but not *change my behavior!*

? **What do you think Godly sorrow is?**

- Sorrow that leads to ***repentance,*** to a ***change of behavior.***

? **What is the ultimate result of Godly sorrow?**

- Leads to ***salvation*** – You will be ***saved!***

NOTE: Paul said that "Godly sorrow" is preceded by attitudes of the heart that result in a change of direction. Discuss these with the student asking if they possess the positive attitudes that bring about a change of direction. If not, it's a sign they possess "worldly sorrow." If so, further encouragement and study of the love and judgment of God is necessary. Remember, Godly sorrow precedes repentance and repentance must precede baptism. If the student is not sorry enough to change, the student is not ready to be baptized!

Earnestness: *A serious attitude toward*

- Are you really serious about changing?

Eagerness to clear yourself: *Excitement about change*

- Are you eager to change?

Indignation: *Being angry that you blew it*

- Do you blame others or accept personal responsibility?

Alarm: *Being afraid enough of sin that you run from it*

- Are you ready to stay away from sin?

Longing: *Wanting deeply to be different*

- Down deep do you really want to change?

Concern: *Bothered by my sin*

- Are you concerned or care-free about your sin?

Readiness to see justice done:

- *Willingness to do right regardless of the cost*

- Will you do whatever it takes?

? **Repentance starts with Godly sorrow on the inside and continues with change that is visible on the outside. What changes in your life would your friends first notice if Godly sorrow leads you to repentance?**

NOTE: Sharing your story of repentance can help your student make personal application. Things like: *"I didn't go to church even on Christmas or Easter but now I wouldn't miss a week." "The first thing that my friends noticed was a change in the way I talked. My language was really foul until I became a Christian." "I would never, ever think about talking about Jesus. I believed that religion was one of those personal things but I repented and started sharing my faith to anyone who would listen."* Think of specific changes that you made that can help your student understand the broad nature of repentance.

Acts 2:36-40 *"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." [37] When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" [38] Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." [40]With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."*

? **What part of this verse might indicate that these people had experienced Godly sorrow?**

- *"they were cut to the heart!"*
- This "cutting" on the inside led them to ask questions about what they needed to do on the outside.

? **What did Peter tell them to do in response to their question?**

- *"repent and be baptized everyone of you..."*

? **What benefits did Peter say they would receive if they chose to respond properly?**

- *"...for the forgiveness of sins... And you will receive the gift of the holy spirit,...."*Save *yourselves..."*

? **From these verses does it seem that they would receive the benefits if they refused to repent?**

? **From these verses does it seem that they would receive the benefits if they refused to be baptized?**

? **Which comes first, repentance or baptism?**

NOTE: Explain that repentance precedes baptism in this verse and in the process of salvation. Baptism is a useless ritual unless the one being baptized is willing to repent.

CLOSE EACH STUDY BY CALLING THE STUDENT TO A...

COMMITMENT AND A CHALLENGE.

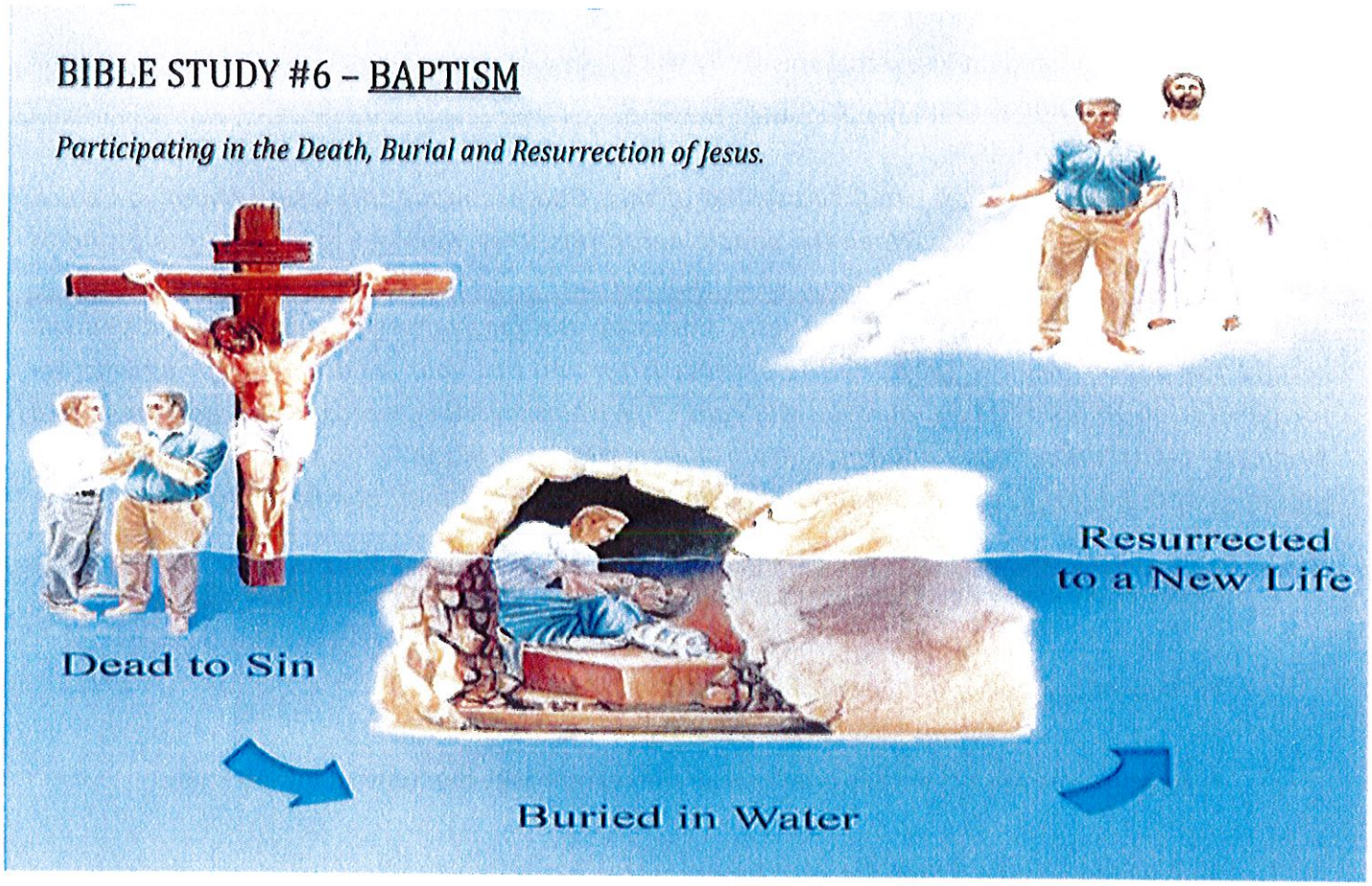
COMMITMENT: Are you ready to repent, that is have a change of mind and heart that leads you to a change of life?

NOTE: Explain that a "yes" answer means that one is ready to move on to the baptism segment. Remind the student that repentance (a change of direction) is not a one-time decision for the disciple of Christ. *It is their lifestyle!* Let your student know that the next study will begin with the last verse covered in this study.

CHALLENGE: Begin to examine your life for areas in need of repentance. Make a list and ask God to help you change. Share the list with a mature believer who can assist you in these areas.

BIBLE STUDY #6 – BAPTISM

Participating in the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus.



Study Goals:

- *To show that baptism is an **act of faith** in which one's sins are forgiven ("the wall of sin" is removed) and one's relationship with God is restored.* (Acts 2:38-42, Acts 22:16, Colossians 2:12-13, Galatians 3:26-27)

- *To show the radical nature of baptism by ---*

  - *Stressing that baptism requires the **death of one's old self** (the surrendering of life to Christ). Never "bury" someone who is not willing to "die to self."* (Romans 6:1-6)

  - *Emphasizing that the death of the old self is followed by a resurrection where the newly resurrected one lives a "new life" that is **devoted to pleasing Christ**.* (Romans 6:6-12)

- *To communicate that baptism is an act of faith where one accepts God's mercy and grace, not a work where one "earns" salvation."* (1Titus 3:4-7)

- *To show that Bible Baptism is the **immersion** of a believer. (**Greek Word:** baptidzo ... to immerse, submerge, to dip.... Greek Word: rhantizo ... to sprinkle)*
  (Romans 6, Galatians 3, Colossians 2 ... imagery of baptism as a burial)

NOTE: Let your student know that this study will begin with the same passage that we closed the last study with. Remind them of the context of Acts 2.

Acts 2:22-42 *"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." [37] When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" [38] Peter replied, "Repent* ***and*** *be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." [40] With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." [41] Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."*

? **These people asked Peter what they should do to be saved. What was his answer?**

- *"Repent and be baptized everyone one of you..."*
- ***Repent*** gives you a chance to briefly recap and reemphasize the truths of the last study.

? **What would happen if they did what Peter said?**

- ***If*** they repented and were baptized then God would ...
  - ▶ Forgive their sin
  - ▶ Give them His Holy Spirit (to live in them)
  - ▶ Add them to His family

? **What would happen if they did not do what Peter said?**

- If they did not repent and were not baptized, then God would not forgive their sin, not give them His Holy Spirit (to live in them), and not add them to His family.

NOTE: In the back of this study is a baptism illustration. It is a model for you to recreate during this segment. At this time draw out the wall of sin part, reminding the student of the results of sin. Use the Acts 2:38 passage to show that the wall of sin is removed when a person in faith turns to God and is baptized. Forgiveness, removal of the wall was promised at baptism. The next passage reinforces this truth as it tells the story of Saul's conversion which culminates with Saul being told to be baptized, to "wash away" his sins. One again you will need to explain the setting and describe the characters.

? **Do you see baptism and salvation connected in this passage? If so how?**

- The forgiveness of sins, gift of the Holy Spirit and being added to God's family signify a major change in relationship and standing, but Peter does not leave the significance of their response to conjecture. He clearly lets them know that their response is connected to their salvation when he tells the people to *"save themselves from this corrupt generation."*

? **What did the people do who accepted Peter's message?**

? **Many heard the message but not all accepted it. What is the difference in hearing it and accepting it?**

- Accepting it is believing it enough to <u>do what it says</u>.

? **Is it those who hear the message or those who <u>accept</u> it that receive the promised blessings?**

Acts 22:1-16 *"Then Paul said: [3]"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. [4] I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, [5] as also the high priest and all the Council can testify. I even obtained letters from them to their brothers in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished. [6] "About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. [7] I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?' [8] "'Who are you, Lord?' I asked. "'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. [9] My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me. [10] "'What shall I do, Lord?' I asked. "'Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.' [11] My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me. [12] "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. [13] He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him. [14] "Then he said: 'The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. [15] You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. [16] And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'"*

? **What did Ananias want Saul (Paul) to do?**

? **What would happen when Paul was baptized?**

- His sins would be washed away (the wall removed!)

NOTE: The preceding passage discussed God's role in baptism, which is what God does when one is immersed in Christ (baptized). Romans chapter 6 is about the student's role in baptism, which is what God calls them to do in their baptism. Baptism without these internals is a meaningless outward ritual. In Paul's words baptism is the death and burial of the old self and its way of life. If there is no commitment to "crucify self," there is no reason for baptism. <u>We only bury dead people</u>**!** In this segment you will once again do much of the talking. You are preaching Christ and Him crucified. *You will draw out the rest of the baptism illustration to help communicate the truth of Romans 6.*

Romans 6:1-4 *"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? [2] By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? [3] Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4] We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

NOTE: These Roman Christians had slid back into their old sinful way of life. Paul calls them back to a proper relationship with Christ and a proper attitude toward sin by reminding them of the commitment they made when they were baptized.

? **Paul states that these disciples had at one time "died to sin." What do you think he meant by "we died to sin" and "how can we live in it any longer"?**

? **From this passage do you see any hint as to <u>when</u> they made this commitment?**

- At their baptism.
- Baptism is a participation in and a re-enactment of Christ's *death, burial, and resurrection.*
- As Christ died on the cross, our old self dies at baptism.
- Like Christ, resurrection will occur <u>after</u> death.
- Like Christ, I will rise to live a new life.

v. 5 *"If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."*

? **What does this verse say will happen "if" you die to self at baptism?**

- *You will "also be united with him in his resurrection."*

? **What happens if you do not die to self at baptism?**

- *"If you have not been united in death, you certainly will not be united in resurrection."*
- You would only get wet!

vs. 6-7 *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— [7] because anyone who has died has been freed from sin."*

? **What must happen in order for you to be freed from sin?**

- Die to self - *"old self was crucified... anyone who has died has been freed from sin."*

v. 8 *"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him"*

- To state the same truth negatively: *If we did not die with Christ, we believe we will not live with him."*

? **From what you have seen so far, does it make any sense for you to be baptized if you are not ready to die to self, to surrender your life?**

- Let your student know that the toughest question they will answer is not *"Do I want to be saved?"* but *"Am I willing to die to my old way of life."*

vs. 9-14 *"For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery [10] The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. [11] In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. [12] Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. [13] Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. [14] For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."*

- Your *baptism* is not only the time when your sins are *forgiven;* it is the time when you *switch masters*. It signals a radical change in the way you will live.
- Baptism is a participation in and a re-enactment of Christ's *death, burial, and resurrection.*
  * As Christ was put to death on the cross, our old self is put to death at baptism.
  * Like Christ, resurrection will occur after death.

? **Are you ready to crucify your old self and give Christ complete, total control of your life?**

? **Why would anyone (why would you) be willing to do something so radical?**

- You believe in Christ and His word. You trust him to run your life better than you can.

NOTE: The next four passages are designed to let the student know that the baptism is an act of faith and any blessing one receives as a result is a gracious gift that God gives because of one's faith.

Colossians 2:12 *"...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead."*

Galatians 3:26-27 *"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, [27] for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."*

Titus 3:5-7 *"...he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, [6] whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7] so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."*

NOTE: Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born of the water and spirit (John 3). Peter commanded (Acts 2:38) that people be baptized, promising forgiveness of sins (sins washed away Acts 22) and the gift of God's Spirit. Titus states that we are saved by the washing of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. It is in baptism that I accept the grace and mercy of God and am born again of the water and the Spirit.

1 Peter 3:21 *"...and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ..."*

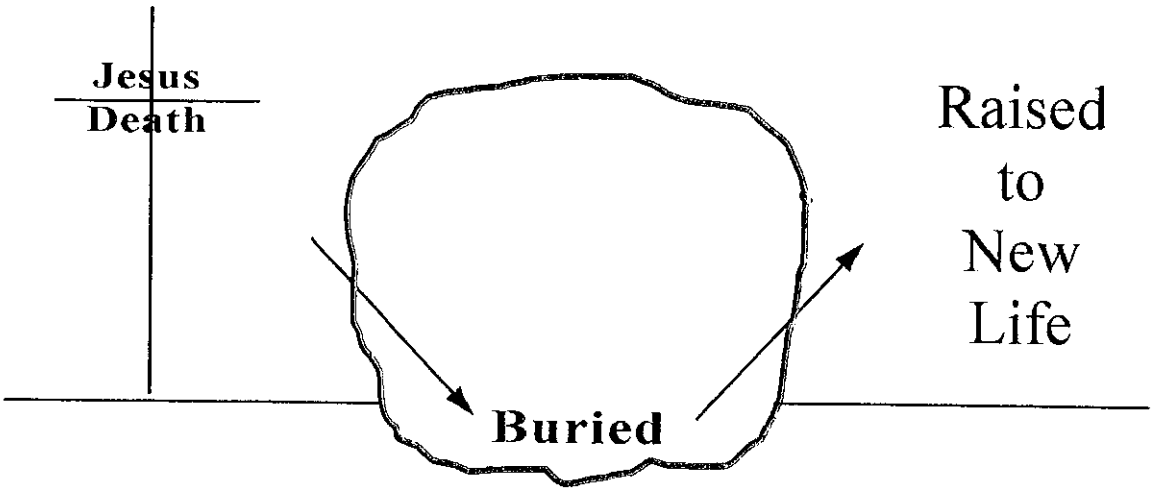
NOTE: My role in baptism is to trust Christ and surrender self. The power of baptism is only from the power of the resurrection. My role is to trust God to run my life because I believe Him. God's gracious role is granting forgiveness/new life. My baptism is an act of my faith and the subsequent forgiveness and rebirth are acts of God's grace. We are saved by grace through faith.

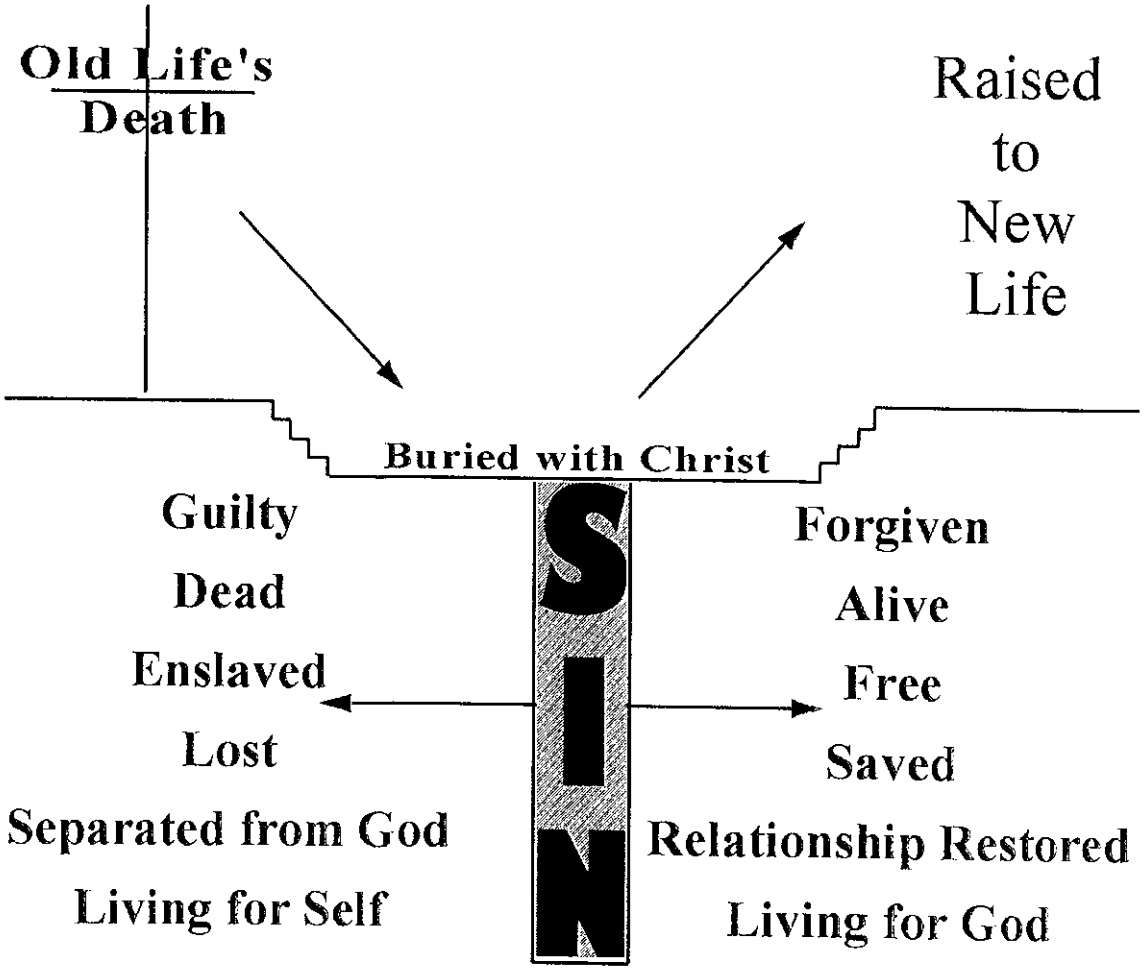
Acts 22:16 *"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."*

NOTE: This question to Paul seems almost rhetorical. **Not so with your student.** The question "What are you waiting for?" should not be viewed as a formality. If used properly it provides a wonderful opportunity to challenge the student to do as Jesus suggested (Luke 14) and "count the cost" before taking this life-altering step to establish their relationship with Christ.

Baptism

A participation in the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus **(Romans 6:1-6)**





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